

The Supernatural
INCARNATION
O F
JESUS CHRIST

Proved to be FALSE ;

HAVING

No Foundation in the Prophets, nor in all the *Old Testament* ; and utterly inconsistent with his being the Son of *David*. But the main Prop and Support of all the absurd Doctrines, both of Papists and Protestants ; to the great Scandal and Reproach of the true Christian Religion.

And that our

Lord *JESUS CHRIST*,
Was the real SON of *Joseph* and *Mary*.

By *E. E L W A L L. R*

Thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing. Luke ii. 48.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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Where may be had, by the same AUTHOR, (Price 1 s.
A DECLARATION against all the Kings and Temporal Powers under Heaven, shewing that they have no Authority over their Subjects in SPIRITUAL THINGS, &c. with an Account of his Trial at *Stafford Assizes*, before Judge *Denton*, and honourably acquitted.

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T H E

Supernatural Incarnation

O F

J E S U S C H R I S T

Proved to be false, &c.

Honoured Friend,

I TAKE thy Advice very kindly, but must prefer the Truth. I have many things on my Mind concerning what we talk'd of : but my Affairs, and narrow Time, will not admit me to mention them ; only consider this, that whatever honest Man thou art conversant with, that has no other Views but the Glory of his Creator, and his own and Fellow-Creature's Good, can be in no great Danger of being seduced into a low Esteem of his supreme Benefactor. For such a Man will not admit, nor easily give Credence to any Doctrines, come from what real or pretended Author they will, which do not quadrate with the moral Character and absolute Perfections of that high and holy, wise, just and good God, whom

he hath rightly and truly set his Affections upon, and anchor'd his Hope.

But that Man seems to be in ten times ten more Danger to decline in his Love to God, who can suspend or discard his rational Faculties to that Degree (either through want of due Attention to find out Truth, or for worldly Views, Aims and Ends) as to believe the most glaring Absurdities : That the most high God and Father of All, has an Equal ; yea, two Persons that are both equal to him in Power and Glory. That, the first, or the third Person, begat the Second Person, by impregnating a Virgin, or young Woman (a very honest just Man's Wife) who, according to that Story, had espoused her to himself. *But before they came together, she was found with Child by the Holy Ghost.* And yet this pretended God, or Angel, was so notoriously unjust and manifestly unreasonable, as to desire *Joseph, to take to him Mary his Wife*, without giving him one Roman Penny, or so much as a single Mite, though she was then great with Child, according to the Story-teller, before her Husband ever knew her.

Now the great Rector of the Universe had said plainly, *Ye shall be holy : for I the Lord your God am holy. The Adulterer and the Adulteress shall surely be put to Death.* This is the Law of God, and shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right. How gross and odious it is therefore to impute such Things to him that

is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity with the least Degree of Approbation.

For he has no need of Women nor of Men, if *he were a hungry* he would not tell us, for all the *World is his*, and the *Cattle of a thousand Hills*. It seems to savour like one of the old Heathenish Stories of the secret Amours of *Jupiter*, and other such lascivious pretended Gods as he was.

Besides, every wise and good Man, who reveres the sacred Name of God, ought to be very cautious how he gives Credit to a Story that is so shocking to Reason; and seems to strike at the moral Character of the supreme Being, the pure and holy Fountain of all Goodness. Especially when we consider, that the First of all the Christians, who were called the *Nazarenes*, from the Town of *Nazareth*, where Christ was brought up; and they were his Neighbours; and, 'tis very likely, knew *Joseph* and *Mary*, both before, and at the Time of their Marriage; and at the Births of *Jesus*, and *James*, and *Joses*, and *Simon*, and *Judas*, and their Sisters; but never knew nor believed any thing of this marvellous or monstrous Conception; but did constantly believe *Jesus of Nazareth*, to be the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, in the common way of Procreation, and this I verily believe is true, and that they were a very loving laborious honest religious Couple, that lived in the true Fear of God, and in full Obedience to his Law, and that they all work'd with their Father, and made Carts, and Rakes, and Yoaks, and Ploughs for their Neighbours

at their honest, needful, and necessary Vocation.

And that *Joseph* was the real Father of *Jesus*, appears plainly, from his natural Affection to him, at the Feast of the Passover, and from *Mary's* own Words also, who expressly calls him *his Father*, without any Reserve : For it is said, *the Child grew and waxed strong, or high, in Spirit* (as his Cousin *John* the Baptist did the same) *filled with Wisdom ; and the Grace, viz. the Favour of God was upon him.* Now his Parents went to *Jerusalem* every Year, at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve Years old, they went and took him with them, and when they returned a Day's Journey and found him not, both of them, the Father, as well as the Mother, turned back to seek him, and when they found him, *they were amazed : and his Mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ; behold thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing.* Let any wise, unprejudiced, sincere Searcher after Truth, observe here, if he cannot see plainly the same natural paternal Love from the Father as from the Mother, both of them equally sorrowing till they had found their Son. And here *Joseph* shews forth some of the Tenderness, that was in his royal Ancestor *David*, towards his Son *Abshalom*, saying, *O my Son Abshalom, my Son, my Son Abshalom : would God I had died for thee, O Abshalom, my Son, my Son.*

But I am apt to think, that if *David* had thought some other Being, or Agent, had been before-

before-hand concern'd in the begetting of *Abalom*, he had never utter'd that pathetic Expression. But above all things, every judicious Man ought to consider; what a palpable Blot, and manifest Contradiction, this Notion is, that Jesus is not the real Son of *Joseph*; for almost all the Writers of the New Testament do positively maintain and assert that Jesus is descended, lineally descended, from *David*: and draw down the Genealogy from him to *Joseph*. But if *Jesus* be not the real Son of *Joseph*, then he cannot be brought into his Line, nor have any just Right or natural Claim to be the Son of *David*, nor to be lineally descended from him.

Because all Men of Learning and Understanding in the *Jewish* Laws and Customs know full well, that it is of no great Moment what Line the Woman was; for the Genealogy is always brought down by the Male Line. For *Salmon's* Wife was a *Canaanite*, and *Boaz's* Wife was a *Moabite* (*David's* great Grandmother). But the natural Genealogy runs in the Male Line from *Salmon* to *Boaz*, to *David*, to *Zerobabel*, and so down to *Joseph* the Husband of *Mary*; and if *Jesus Christ* was not the real Son of *Joseph*, all the Men in the World can never prove him to be lineally descended from *David*, nor of the Tribe of *Judah*; for it is not certain whether *Mary* was of that Tribe, or of the Tribe of *Levi*, because her Cousin *Elizabeth*, it is most likely, was of the Tribe of *Levi*. Now besides many others, the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, positively and expressly tells us, that it is evident our Lord
sprang

sprang out of Judah, and from the Loins of *David*, and of the Seed of *Abraham*; all which must fall through, if this strange and absurd Story of the Incarnation be true.

But besides all this, if *Jesus* was not the true Son of *Joseph*, then it makes the Angel to tell *Mary* a notorious Falshood (and surely, my Friend *Gabriel*, if he were a good Angel, would not tell Lies) for he expressly says, that, *the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David*, Luke i. 32. From hence, nothing can be more plain, than *Jesus* was the Son of *David*; but if he was begotten by the Holy Ghost, or by the Angel, said to be sent by God, unto a City of Galilee, named *Nazareth*; to a Virgin espoused, viz. betrothed, married, assured in Wedlock, to a Man whose Name was *Joseph*, of the House of *David*; and the Virgin's Name was *Mary*. Whosoever came upon her, or overshadowed her, if it was not *Joseph* her Husband that really begot *Jesus*, then was he not the Son of *David*, but of some other Being or Agent, and not descended either from *Abraham*, *David*, or just and righteous *Joseph*. And all the Popes and Councils, Prelates and Priests, under Heaven, can never make a false Proposition a true one.

And the best, I think, that can be said of this Jargon, monstrous Doctrine, is, that it is a grand unintelligible unconceivable Piece of ill-concerted, unconnected, incoherent Nonsense.

And may I be allowed to write my sincere Opinion concerning *Joseph* and *Mary*, and their
holy

hold Child and Son *Jesus*, of *Nazareth* ; I do verily believe, that they are all three most shamefully abused and scandalized, by almost all Denominations of pretended Christians, except the first Followers and Believers of Christ, called *Nazarenes* ; for they never, any of them, believed otherwise of him than I myself now do. And that is, That *Joseph* and *Mary* were a truly honest and religious Couple, walking in all the Ordinances of God blameless ; that they were a faithful, constant, loving Pair, and never violated the Marriage-Bed ; that she never knew any Being, Angel, or Man, either before or after her Espousal, but her Husband *Joseph* ; and that by him, and him only, she had her First-born Son *Jesus*, and *James*, and *Joses*, *Simon*, *Judas*, and his Sisters. And agreeable to this, all the *Jews*, that were personally acquainted with *Joseph* and *Mary*, and with *Jesus* and his Brethren, and all the *Nazarenes*, who were Neighbours and much more likely to know the Marriage and Birth of *Jesus* (than those who wrote this scandalous Story three or four and fifty Years after) all these aforesaid, never believed any thing of this supernatural Incarnation, but constantly affirmed, he was begotten by *Joseph*, in the universal Way of Procreation ; and People may full as well say, the Holy Ghost came upon *Sarah* and overshadowed her dead Womb, and begat *Isaac*, or that the Holy Ghost begat *John Baptist*, for it is not expressly said, that *Zecharias* begot him ; but it is said, that *Elizabeth* was
filled

filled with the Holy Ghost, Luke i. 41. So *John* the Baptist, and the Prophet *Jeremiah*, were sanctified from the Womb, and in that Sense, no doubt, the holy Prophet *Jesus* was, by the Holy Ghost sanctified from his Mother's Womb, the Anointed, that is, *the Christ*. And I firmly believe he was a Prophet sent by God, as *John* the Baptist was; and that they both preached that excellent and eternal Doctrine of Repentance and Reformation, as the true and sure Way to obtain Remission of Sins, Reconciliation to God, and Acceptance with him. Honestly telling all Men, that the Ax was laid to the Root of the Tree, and if they did not bring forth good Fruit, they would be cut down and cast into the Fire. And that whatsoever we would that Men should do unto us, so do likewise, for that to do so was the Substance or Quintessence of *the Law and the Prophets*, ever was, and will be, to the End of Time.

But as Priest-craft and Persecution holds up Popery, and all its absurd Doctrines, so Liberty and Toleration tends to overturn it, and a free impartial Examination of those Doctrines, will not fail to discover their Truth, or their Falshood. The Essence of Protestantism consists in every one's having a Right to judge for himself, and acting according to that Judgment, after he has taken all due Pains to find out the Truth. And this glorious Principle is founded upon the plain Words of Christ himself, *Why do ye not even of your own selves judge what is right*. So that true Followers of Christ ought
not

not to suffer any Men to impose their Doctrines on them, till they have examined and judged of them, whether they are right or wrong, true or false. And if Priests tell us, that this Evangelist says so, and that Apostle says so and so, we are not sure they did say so; but if they did, we are sure that they were fallible Men, have not only been egregiously mistaken in their Expectation of a temporal Messiah, but in other Matters to be blamed; even *Peter* himself, who bought a Sword, and intended nothing less than to be Captain-General, and *Judas* to be Lord High-Treasurer, and *James* and *John* to be Principal Secretaries of State to Christ in his temporal Kingdom. And this mistaken Opinion they continued in all the Time Christ was upon Earth; even after his Resurrection, they then said to him, *Lord, wilt thou at this Time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* They did not apprehend any thing of a spiritual Kingdom, till after Christ was ascended into Heaven. And even after that, many of them, both of the Apostles and others, seemed to expect his sudden coming again to reign upon Earth, tho' now above 1700 Years since. It is certain, that both *John* the Baptist, and *Jesus Christ*, were born and bred, and lived and died *Jews*, and came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them; they would not have Men to think such a Thought.

But they explained *Judaism*, and set it in a due Light, illustrating the truly rational and spiritual Sense of the Law.

And

And *Christ* left no new Laws in writing, but *Jews*, and the Followers of *Christ*, had one and the same Canon of Scripture, viz. the Old Testament, nor was there any Separation of the latter from the former, with whom they continued many Years in Communion after the Death of *Jesus Christ*; for, as *James* told *Paul*, *Tbou seest, Brother, how many Thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the Law, and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews, which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their Children, neither to walk after the Customs. What is it therefore? The Multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come; do this therefore that we say unto thee: we have four Men which have a Vow upon them; them take, and purify thy self with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their Heads: and all may know, that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the Law, Acts xxi.* Now observe, this Counsel to *Paul*, was not given by *James* only, but in Concert with all the Elders, who were then present. It is very plain, that these Apostles and Elders, command and advise *Paul* to a strict Observation of the Law and the Customs. For though they had allowed the Gentile Christians a Dispensation from Circumcision, and the Customs, but not to believing *Jews*; they must walk orderly, and keep the Law. And *Paul* was to show before all the People, that all those

those Informations they had heard, of his teaching the Jews that were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, were nothing, or not so; but that he himself walk'd orderly, and kept the Law, very strictly.

Tho', by the by, the Information the People had, seems not true; but the Design for certain was to persuade them it was not. And Paul, at that Time, being neither Priest-rid, or Party-rid, did as they directed, took the Advice of the Church-Guides, and with all the Rituals of the Law, *went into the Temple with the four Men*. But this Device did not answer the End, for soon after there was such a Squall or Tournado in the Temple, as some think made Friend Paul repent his Conformity. But be it so or not, many good Men have been at a Loss how to account of that Matter. For if it was the Duty then of believing Jews, to walk orderly, and keep the Law; it must be so now because this was near thirty Years after the Ascension of Jesus Christ, and the Descension of the real, or supposed, Holy Ghost on the Apostles. So that if ever they had any such extraordinary Effusions of the Holy Ghost, as they relate, it was long before this Church-Affair happened. And many honest, wise, and good Men may be reasonably inclined to believe, that those real or pretended Effusions were evaporated or ascended into Heaven again; for a Person of common Sagacity, who impartially reads and considers that Passage of the Apostles and Elders, may be naturally induced to conceive,

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they

they had no Supernatural Affluence of the Holy Ghost at that time, whatever they might or might not have on the Day of *Pentecost* many Years before. For it seems no Inconsistency, that the believing Gentiles might forsake *Moses*, and not observe the Law, but the believing *Jews* must *walk orderly and keep the Law*; and even *Paul* himself is required by the Apostle and Elders, so to do. When at the same time, *the Gentiles were to observe no such thing: saving only that they keep themselves from things offered to Idols, and from Blood, and from strangled, and from Fornication*; tho' our Lord *Jesus Christ* tells us, *there shall be one Fold and one Shepherd*; and he left the Law, as he found it, and never added to it, nor any way diminished from it, but fully obeyed and kept it all his whole Life. For it was not *Christ*, but the *Roman Armies* that overthrew the Temple and the *Jewish State*. See *Josephus*.

And the great Variation and Discord of the Evangelists about the Genealogies, and other Matters, but especially this strange absurd Doctrine of the *Incarnation*, and many other Relations and Transactions of the Apostles and Elders, gives great Occasion to many honest, sincere, judicious Enquirers after Truth, to conclude they were fallable Men, as we ourselves are; were many Years mistaken every one of them, all the time that *Christ* was upon Earth, and might be so in some other respects to the End of their Lives.

And

And tho' such honest Men may be branded with the Odious and uncharitable Names of Hereticks, and Infidels, and what they please, as Papists do all Protestants that have reformed from them, yet are we content to leave it to the great discriminating Day, when we are sure God will judge the Hearts of all Men, in Righteousness. He being no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation him that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted. And if Peter had never said so, yet it was, and is, and ever will be, an eternal Truth.

But as to this Supernatural Incarnation, there is no Proof nor Ground for it either in the Old Testament, or in Reason. The Quotations out of *Isa. vii. 14.* does not suit to it at all, but evidently confutes it, and cannot relate to the Conception of the Virgin Mary, and of the Birth of Jesus; but plainly relate to a Virgin, or young Woman, in the Days of Abaz, King of Judah, seven hundred Years before.

Tho' Matthew tells us, *all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, Behold, a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his Name Immanuel.*

Now the Hebrew Word, *Almah*, signifies a Virgin, or young Woman, as will clearly appear from the Prophet's History and Fact. For, when Rezin King of Syria, and Pekah, King of Israel, were Confederates together, against Abaz, King of Judah; *Isaiab*, the Prophet

phet was sent by God, first to comfort *Abaz* and all his Nation, and afterwards to assure them by a Sign or Miracle, that his Enemies should in a little time be confounded. But *Abaz*, being very humble, and in deep concern for his People, for his Heart was moved and the Heart of his People, as the Trees of the Wood are moved with the Wind, would not ask a Sign; the Prophet said, *The Lord shall give you a Sign: Behold a Virgin (or young Woman) shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel, Butter and Honey shall be it; that he may know to refuse the Evil and chuse the Good, for before the Child shall know to refuse the Evil and chuse the Good, the Land shall be forsaken of both her Kings. Isa. vii. 14, 15, 16.*

Now this Sign is accordingly given *Abaz* by the Prophet, Who took two Witnesses, and in their Presence went unto the said Virgin, or young Woman, call'd the Prophetess, who in due time conceived and bare a Son, who was named *Immanuel*; after whose Birth, the Projects and evil Designs of *Rezin* and *Pekab* were soon confounded, according to the Prophecy and Sign given by the Prophet.

And the Prophet himself puts it past all Dispute, by his own express Words, as well as by the whole Narration, that his own Child was the Sign mentioned, when he says, *Behold I and the Children, whom the Lord hath given me, are for Signs and for Wonders in Israel, from the Lord of Hosts, that dwelleth in Mount Sion.*

Here

Here nothing can be more evident, for this is the plain, clear Design of the Prophet, literally, obviously, and primarily understood; and thus is he understood by one of the most judicious of Interpreters, the great *Grotius*.

But to suppose the Prophet to have the Virgin *Mary's* Conception and of her Son *Jesus* in View, is a very great and monstrous Absurdity, and contrary to the very Intent and Design of the Sign given to the Prophet, to convince *Abaz*, that he brought a Message from the Lord, to assure him that the two Kings should not succeed against him. For how could a Virgin's Conception and bearing a Son seven hundred Years after, be any Sign to *Abaz*, that the Prophet came to him with the said Message from the Lord? And how useless was it to *Abaz* as well as absurd in itself; for the Prophet to say, that, before a Child, born seven hundred Years hence, *shall distinguish between Good and Evil, the Land shall be forsaken of both her Kings*, which should seem a Banter instead of a Sign.

But a Prophecy of a certain Birth of a Male Child, to be born within a Year or short Time, seems to be a proper Sign, as being not only what could not with Certainty be foretold, except by a Person inspir'd by God; but as immediately or soon coming to pass, and consequently evidencing itself to be a divine Sign, answering all the Purposes of a Sign. And such a Sign is agreeable to the divine Conduct on the like Occasions. God gave *Gideon*, and

also to *Hezekiab*, immediate Signs to prove, that he spoke to them; and that the things promised to them should come to pass.

So that this Prophecy of *Isaiab*, being plainly and literally fulfill'd in the most conspicuous and primary Sense of the Words (as any wise unprejudiced Person may easily see by reading the Passage) there seems not to be the least Ground for that astonishing Story said to be in the first of *Matthew*. For many learned, wise, judicious Men have affirmed, that those two first Chapters, did not originally belong to *Matthew's* Gospel, but has been foisted into it long after it was wrote, and indeed that Gospel itself has been contested, doubted, and contended about in many if not most Ages. But that Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, or *Nazarenes*, which was thought to be the first and best and truest Narrative of those early times, is banished out of the World, because it had not one Word in it, of this unconceivable Story of the Incarnation.

And as it is apparent this shameful Story has no Foundation in the Prophet *Isaiab*, nor in all the Old Testament, the only sure Canon of Scripture; for what is called the New Testament, is doubtful, and of uncertain Authority. And the Canon of it not being fully settled many hundred Years after Christ, and what Books they did collect were cull'd and pick'd out of a very great Number that were in private Mens Hands, as at the Council of *Laodicea*, and at other times; this Book shall be counted

counted Canonical ; that shall not, this shall be
 owned Genuine and Orthodox, that Spurious
 and Heretical ; and all this, and many other
 things, as Creeds, &c. made and done by a
 Pack of ignorant, proud, insolent, ambitious,
 wrangling Bishops, as is manifest from their
 own Histories, which represent them after such
 a Manner ever since Persecution prevailed, as
 one would imagine he was reading a Story of
 Devils, rather than of the Successors of the
 Apostles, see *Jerom, Basil, Ambrose, Hilary,*
and Nazianzen. And as they were all fallible
 Men, and not to be depended on, nor their De-
 cisions, so the famous *Chillingworth* tells us,
 Cap. 6. “ That he sees plainly, and that with
 “ his own Eyes, that there are Councils against
 “ Councils, some Fathers against others, the
 “ same Fathers against themselves, a Consent
 “ of Fathers of one Age, against a Consent of
 “ Fathers of another Age, the Church of one
 “ Age, against the Church of another Age.”

Therefore as we are not likely to have a just
 Catalogue of genuine Books nor Decisions hand-
 ed down to us by such Men, so every Soul of
 us have great Cause to bless, praise, and adore
 our Creator, that hath graciously endowed us
 with rational Faculties, to prevent our being
 imposed upon by any Men ; that would thrust
 such notorious, absurd Doctrines down our
 Throats, as this of the Incarnation is. And
 one would reasonably think, that whoever would
 carefully and honestly read over the whole Pas-
 sage in *Isaiab*, will never give Credence to that
 Story

Story any more. For as it never did the Christian Religion any good, so, on the other Hand, it has done it inexpressible Hurt and Disgrace. For not a few, but many other false Doctrines are built upon it, and that the Papists are all aware of; especially in the most bigotted Countries, as *Portugal, Spain, and Italy*: As, *Trinity*, making of Images, and bowing down to them; praying to *Mary*, the Mother of *Jesus Christ*, and to Saints, *Transubstantiation*, and Merits of *Jesus*, and infinite Satisfaction, viz. one infinite Person makes Satisfaction to another infinite Person, and many more such Jargon Principles; all founded upon this darling, popish Doctrine of the *Incarnation*. So that if it falls, great will be the Fall of it, for all the rest, or at least a vast Number, of the Popish and Protestant Trumpery will fall with it. And as they are held up by Force and Falshood, Inquisitions and Persecutions, being the main Props of them; so when they fail, down they all fall even to the Ground.

For they having no Foundation in Reason, nor Scripture, horrid and shocking to the former, and the latter detesting and declaring against them, by God himself, and all his Prophets. Reason tells us there is but one first Cause, who is the grand Causality of all other Beings; and that he has all Perfections, which he does not receive or derive from any other, but has them originally of himself, being Independent and Self-existent, and in this it is that the Unitarians triumph as unanswerable. And

as to the Scriptures, no Words can possibly be more plain, than the sacred first Commandment, the God of the Universe so solemnly declares; *Thou shalt have no other Gods besides Me.* Thus saith the great Fountain of Reason, who is worthy to be believed, and to the Truth of which all the Patriarchs and Prophets give Witness. And had not this Scandalous Doctrine of Incarnation been set up, that unreasonable and monstrous Doctrine of Trinity had never been born. And had that never been born, then for certain, Transubstantiation had never had a Being; neither should we have ever heard of a Breaden God among Christians, nor Wine being his Blood, It would be very easy, but almost endless, to expose all the other false Doctrines which hang on this sham Doctrine of Incarnation, as bowing down to Images of Gold, and Silver, and Brass, yea to Stocks and Stones, tho' in flat Contradiction to the sacred Law of God, making no more Difficulty to break the Second, than to break the first Commandment, by making the most high God to be a Plurality of Persons, a quarter of a Dozen, or half a Dozen. But by the Multitude of Images they make, of *Mary* and *Jesus*, any wise Person may easily guess at the Original Source from whence this abominable Practice of Image-making sprung.

O Reason, Reason, how shall I set forth thy Excellency! All thy Dictates are in Righteousness, nothing froward or perverse is in them; they are all plain to him that understandeth;
and

and right to them that find Knowledge. The Almighty LORD created thee in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of Old; thou wast set up from everlasting, from the Beginning or ever the Earth was: Thou leadeft all those that will be guided by thee in the pleasant Ways of Truth and Righteousness. Well might the Almighty Lord delight in thee, who art the Beginning of the Creation of God, and the First-born of every Creature; thou art the Light of the World to all those that will be illuminated and governed by thee; they that love thee and seek thee shall find thee, all they that hate thee love Death, and bring Calamity and Destruction upon themselves; thou art the Candle of the Lord, a Measure or Degree of which he hath graciously given to every Man to direct his Way.

Holy Men, in all Ages, have called thee by synonymous Names, the Spirit, the Word, the Light, the Power, the Reason, or Wisdom of God, for he created thee from the Beginning before the World, and thou shalt never fail.

All Wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever. Wisdom hath been created before all, and the Understanding of Prudence from everlasting. The Word or Reason of God most High, is the Fountain of Wisdom; and her Ways are everlasting Commandments. Unto whom hath the Knowledge of Wisdom been made manifest? And who hath understood her great Experience? There is one wise and
greatly

greatly to be feared ; the Lord sitting upon his Throne. He created, and saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his Works. She is with all Flesh according to his Gift, and he hath given her to them that love him. The Fear of the Lord is Honour, and Glory, and Gladness, and a Crown of rejoicing. Whoso feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find Favour in the Day of his Death.

From what has been observed above, I think any reasonable Enquirer after Truth, may very easily and clearly perceive, that the different Names which holy Men of God have made use of in all Ages are synonymous Terms, signifying not a distinct Person from God, but his incomparable Qualities, Operations, and Perfections, as the Spirit, the Light, the Word, the Power, the Candle of the Lord, the Reason or Wisdom of God, *a Measure whereof the Bountiful Creator hath given to every Man and Woman to profit withal*, that is, to direct our Way : And as we use and improve, or abuse, slight, and hide this Measure ; so, saith Reason and Scripture, will our Reward or Judgment be. Therefore it is said, *the Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom, a good Understanding have all they that depart from Iniquity*. Now it is certain that God gave us this Measure of Reason or Wisdom, to judge for ourselves, that no Deceivers might impose false and absurd Doctrines upon us, whether Popes or Prelates, Priests or Preachers, *if they speak*

Speak not according to this Word, Reason or Wisdom of God, it is because there is no Light in them, a deceived Heart hath turned them aside, and they might easily know, if they would honestly and sincerely reason on the Case, that they have a Lye at their Right-hand.

For God cannot act contrary to his own just eternal Law, the sacred seventh Commandment, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.* But this horrid Story of the Incarnation is so monstrous and stupid, as to set forth, that, *the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.* So that she should concieve by coming upon her, and by his overshadowing her; when at the same time this young Woman was espoused, that is betrothed, married, assured in Wedlock, to a just, merciful, good Man, that loved God and his Law, and consequently walked in all the Ordinances of God blameless. How can any truly modest, honest, virtuous Man or Woman, that sincerely loveth God, and has any Regard to his Honour and Glory, ever give Credence to such a manifest Falshood; that the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only true God, that is perfect in Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and Truth, and hateth all Impurity, should transact such an odious Concurrence with a just Man's Wife, in direct Violation of his own holy, just, and good Law.

I will appeal to the Heart and Consciences of all honest, just, impartial, and unprejudiced Men and Women under Heaven, whether it
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be not a most abominable Notion, to impute such detestable things to the most High God, the Holy One of *Israel*. Who never did nor ever will, set his Creatures such an Example to violate his own sacred seventh Commandment, but rather remember *Abraham's* true and rational Words, *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right.*

Whoever sincerely desires that Truth may take place and Errors expos'd, should be well pleased to have all Men of Penetration and Integrity publish their Opinions ; for such Men are the most likely of finding out Truth themselves, and of setting it in a due Light before others. And not to permit ingenious, honest Men to publish, assert, and defend their Opinions, when different from our own, is to distrust our own Cause, and to fear the Light. Is it not ridiculous that the Men of the greatest Integrity and Capacity should be under any discouragement from making Enquiries after Truth.

Free Enquiry is always a Friend to Truth ; and were it not for Force, and Violence, and the Power of persecuting Church, how soon would that other monstrous Doctrine of Transubstantiation be banished all Nations, did but Freedom and Liberty take Place. Whereas, now we see what darling Doctrines both that and the Incarnation are in all Popish, Priest-ridden Countries.

One very remarkable Story we have in the old *Roman* History, concerning *Mars*, who

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was

was called the God of War. “ He was the
 “ Son of *Juno* only, without Company of her
 “ Husband. For when *Juno* was greatly dis-
 “ pleased with herself, that *Jupiter* by strik-
 “ ing his Head, without Company of a Wo-
 “ man, did bring forth the Goddess *Minerva* ;
 “ she by the Counsel of the Goddess *Flora*,
 “ touched a certain Flower in the Field of
 “ *Olenius*, by Virtue whereof she immediately
 “ conceived the God *Mars*.” *Goodwin’s Rom.*
Hist. Chap. 10. So that *Jupiter* brought forth
Minerva without the Company of a Woman,
 and *Juno* conceived *Mars* without the Concur-
 rence of *Jupiter*. What a thousand Pities it is,
 that any honest, good Men, should be persecuted
 or burnt as Hereticks, for not believing this.

But if ever my Writings should be judged to
 deserve Banishment, I trust my Royal Friend
George, will never suffer me to be transported
 to *Italy*, *Spain*, or *Portugal*, for if he does, it
 will be more than ten to one, they burn my
 Beard and Body too, and then he is never like
 to see the old Man and his Beard more. But
 as I have been a sturdy and strenuous Friend to
 him these forty Years and upwards, ever since
 the Nation happily settled the Crown in his
 illustrious Family, and many a stately *Jacobite*
 and *Tory* have I silenced by Dint of Argument,
 and brought to the Ground by Dint of Fist,
 yet generally in Self-Defence, and not to con-
 vince his Judgment ; so I am far from believ-
 ing my Royal Friend will ever do so. But
 rather, that he will find his Royal Mind dis-
 posed

posed to cherish the old' Heart of his Friend *Elwall*, that has undergone so many Dangers, Threatenings, Conteſts, Brunts, and Blows, as I have for his Sake, and eſpecially for the Sake of his Royal Father. In the Beginning of whoſe Reign the rebellious Mobs pulled down and defaced ſo many Meeting-Houſes in the Country ; I then lived at *Wolverhampton* (near which Place all my Anceſtors have lived above eleven hundred Years, ever ſince the *Saxons* conquered the *Britons*). And one time, at Mid-day, near twenty of the diſaffected Mob, brought the Town-ladder, from the Town-hall, carried it, and reared it up to the Meeting-houſe ; three or four honeſt Men, whoſe Hearts were good and true, came for me, and told me they were going to pull down the Meeting-houſe, and were actually then in it, Upon hearing this, I haſtened away with my Staff in my Hand, and they after me, and when there, I put my ſelf at the Head of about ſeven of my Friends, and entered the Meeting-houſe ; no ſooner we were entered, but one of my Friends calls out to me, Mr. *Elwall*, that Man, pointing at him, curſed King *George*. Upon which I preſſed through the thickeſt of them towards him, and he made as if he would ſtand and fight ; but ſeeing me come reſolutely to him, he took to his Heels and run ; and out he went at the other Door of the Meeting-houſe, and I after him, very cloſe and near, but turning too eagerly up the Street, I happened to ſlip down upon one Knee, and ſo he

got off. All then were come out of the Meeting-house to see what came of us; but their Champion being fled, their Courage sunk also. So that I went directly to the Ladder, and said, I would have it down, the Mobbers swore I should not; I said, Down it shall come, and accordingly took hold of it, and my Friends assisting me heartily, we brought it to the Ground; and in the Scuffle two or three Yards broke off the Top of the Ladder in the Fall; then we fell hard to it, I was smartly engaged with two or three at once before me, and one little Fellow struck me with a black Oven-scoop-sfeil, or Broomstick, I soon brought him down, and being close in Struggle with one, I got him down and fell upon him, and one of the Mob, up with a broken Piece of Rail or Timber, and was going to strike me on the Head, behind, as I was upon the Man; but one of my Friends, one *James Bullock*, knock'd him down quick, before the Blow fell; and through the Mercy of God saved my Life, at that Instant of Time; this encouraged us, so I being soon up, that we quickly drove them all off the Ground, in so much, that the Women and some of the Town-people upbraided them, and said, What will you let Mr. *Elwall* and a few Presbyterians beat you: Then they went all about the Town blowing their hideous Horns, to gather more Mob, and many a time threaten'd to shoot me, and to kill me if I had a hundred Lives; and once fir'd a Gun at me through a Window as I rid down *Bilston-street*, whether with a Ball or not,

not, I can't say. And once about threescore of them got together, and did damn their Blood and sink their Spirits, if they did not pull down my House before they slept; but my Wife throwing some Money down from the Window, and by the Persuasion of Neighbours, they walked off; but before they went, to spite me and my Wife, they kneeled on the Step of my Door, and drank the Pretender's Health, by the Name of King *James* the Third. And all this Envy and Hatred for no other Cause, but my firm Affection to the Government, and because I had often asserted the Right our Nation had to settle the Crown in this present Royal Family. So that I may truly say, that I have borne the Heat and Brunt of the Day: And for all the manifold Dangers, the good God of Heaven, hath carried me through, I desire to adore and bless his holy Name for ever.

And I am sure of it, that the Design of my Heart, and the Desire of my Soul, in what I have now wrote in this small Tract, is to give Glory to the most High and Holy God, to vindicate his moral Character, and bear my Testimony to the Fitness, Goodness, and Excellency of his sacred seventh Commandment, and that the Author of it never violated it. And hope in God, that this present Royal Family, will not only preserve the religious Liberties of all his Subjects, but increase them to a perfect Freedom. And that all Degrees of Ecclesiastical Tyranny and Oppression, and forcing one Sect of Christians to pay to another

that do not join with them nor hear them, may be banished out of the Land.

And indeed, the present Face of the Times seems to portend that happy Day to be near at Hand ; for during these last four Reigns, that Hell-born Spirit of Persecution has lost Ground and declined very much : (except the Time of the infamous Schism-Bill, which was very short, for she that had so often said, *I will inviolably maintain the Toleration*, died that very Day that persecuting Act took Date) For they took the Principles of the glorious *William III*, who when some Clergymen, and some Dissenters also, pressed him to persecute the *Socinians*, he said, *No, I will not do the Priests Drudgery*, viz. he would not let the Priests worry his faithful Subjects. And I think my Royal Friend *George the Second*, is more inclined to preserve the religious Liberties of his Subjects, than ever the great *William* was : the Lord be praised for it ; and grant that he may protect all his Subjects, and not suffer any one Sect to make Demands on any other, but Religion may be free, and no manner of way either forced or hindred, nor any Denomination have Power to oppress another upon any Demand relating to Religion, and Things spiritual. Then shall the Lyon and Lamb lie down together, the rapacious Priest shall not tear the innocent Quaker, for Antichristian Tythes any more ; till the Priests can shew that they are all descended from the Tribe of *Levi*, and that all the Nations of the Gentile Christians are all now under the Obligation of the Ceremonial Laws and Customs.

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For my Part, I think it much more easy, plain, natural, or rational, to disprove the Necessity of any Priests at all, in all the Gentile World; except all such whom God hath constituted from the Creation; that is, the Father or Head of every single Family; as it was from our Father *Adam* to this Day, and to all Nations under Heaven, except the peculiar Nation of the *Jews*, or whosoever had a Mind and desire to be proselyted unto them, and then no longer a Foreigner, but as one born in the Land. But the sacred Ten Commandments, and many more of their most excellent Precepts and universal Laws, have a Foundation in the Reason and Circumstances of things, to be observed and for ever practised by all Mankind upon the Face of the Earth.

Tho' some of them never were nor ever will be known by the meer Light of Nature; but depend on Revelation or Information.

As the 2d, 4th, and 5th Commandment, for no Man, by the Light of Nature, would know which is the seventh Day, nor who is his Father or Mother, but it depends upon Information; yet when he knows who they are, and is informed of the Beginning and Creation Order, that God blessed the seventh Day and sanctified it, *viz.* set it apart for holy Use, and the Reason of it, *because that in it, he had rested from all his Work which God created and made.* And then if he be truly honest, sincere, upright, and obedient, his Reason will instantly tell him which Day he ought to keep holy, and.

and who he ought to honour and obey. And that this holy Law of God, called *the Ten Commandments*, belongs to all Mankind equally alike, to all the *Gentiles* when they know it, and to all the *Jews* who do know it. And in that respect it ought to be owned and confessed, that the *Jews* give Glory and Honour to the great Creator of the Universe, by keeping sacred the seventh Day, which he instituted from the Beginning of the World, as a Memorial of it to all Generations; when at the same Time the pretended Christians do most manifestly dishonour and disobey God, by violating generally, the first Table of his sacred Ten Commandments, and by obeying proud lying Popes, Prelates, and Priests Inventions, who have *set up a Day which they have devised out of their own Heart*, as wicked *Jeroboam* did, which neither God nor his Prophets, Christ nor his Apostles, ever commanded, and therefore ought to consider, *if they have not a Lye in their Right-hand; for we must obey God rather than Men*, *Acts* v. 29.

But as to the Priesthood, it is plain God separated the Tribe of *Levi*, because of the numerous Sacrifices and other Services of that State and peculiar People, with Laws and Customs which did not belong to, and could not be kept by, any distant Nation besides, as, *three times a Year shall all your Males appear before the Lord at Jerusalem*. So that it is in vain for Papists or Protestants to talk of Priesthood from them; except they were *Levites*: So that
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by the original Law of Nature, none are Priests, but Fathers or Heads of Families ; as may plainly appear by *Exod. xix. 22.* where God himself calls them Priests, before there was any Priests made or ordained of the Tribe of *Levi.* *And the Lord said unto Moses, go down, charge the People, lest they break through to the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the Priests also which come near the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them.*

Here is a clear Demonstration, that the Fathers of every Family were the Priests from the Beginning of the World to that Time ; which was above two thousand five hundred Years. And therefore all the Families upon Earth, except the *Jews*, are in the same State to this Day. And *Peter* plainly calls them so ; *But ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People ; that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light,* 1 *Pet. ii. 9.* and these were believing *Gentiles.*

Nevertheless, for more publick Worship upon God's holy Day, to meet together in any proper Place, by the united Consent of the said Priests, or Fathers of Families, and appoint one, or as many as they judge meet, to speak one by one, to pray and exhort the People from the Ability that God giveth, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready willing Mind, not lording it over God's Heritage,

Heritage, but that the Spirits of those Priests, is subject to the united Priests.

But may be, some very sober, sincere People may think within themselves, and say, what shall we do in this Matter, here is in this Gospel of *Matthew*, and also in *Luke*, a very particular Account of this Transaction between the Holy Ghost and the Virgin *Mary*; and altho' *Luke* might take the Story from *Matthew*, yet how came he by it, if it were not so? We own it is a strange, unparallel'd Story, enough indeed to astonish any one that reads it, as hard to believe, as that of St *Winifred*; and indeed *Joseph* must have been not only a *just* but a very pacific Man, to take his Wife, big with Child, if he had never known her.

But if those People will but consider, there is another Story in *Matthew*, that is so shocking and incredible, that not one of all the other Evangelists, nor of all the Apostles had brow enough to mention, viz. *And the Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which slept arose, and came out of their Graves after his Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many*, Mat. xxvii. 52, 53.

But my Friend *Matthew*, took care not to tell us one of the Names of them that arose, nor of those that they appeared to.

So that many sagacious, disinterested Persons have thought this Story of Incarnation, &c. to be as true, as all our Witch-Stories. Which Notion or Doctrine of Witches, has been firmly believed by almost all the Orthodox

dox for many hundred of Years, even since the Reformation, in the first Year of *James the First*, it was made a capital Law, and great Numbers have been executed, or rather murdered, and was never repealed till a few Years ago. But since the great *Nassau*, and *Georgian* Families came to the Throne, precious Liberty (a sure Friend to Truth) has been protected and propagated to that Degree, that many, or at least some of the most absurd, unnatural, false, and incoherent Doctrines and Stories have been discovered and justly exploded, by honest Searchers, and unbiassed Enquirers after Truth; who have real Cause to pray, and say, Long live King *George*. And that all his Royal Successors may not only inherit his Crown, but that which is ten times better, and that is his Heaven-born Principle of Liberty; which will more or less, sooner or later be the Overthrow of all Priestcraft Persecution and Falshood from off the Face of the Earth.

Several wise and learned Men have observed, that they meet with many things in some Parts of *Matthew's Gospel*, that betray themselves, and shew that they are not as they were originally.

And *Mark*, his Epitomizer, who agrees with him in many Things, but not one Word of this Incarnation, nor the dead Bodies of the Saints, &c. by which many think, that Gospel of *Matthew's*, which *Mark* wrote from, had nothing of this Incarnation in it then, and is not the same we have now; but strangely altered, misplaced, and dislocated, and that
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to such a Degree, that as soon as the *Nazarene* Christians saw it, they rejected it, as not being the original Gospel of *Matthew*. So that ever since it has been denied by some, and doubted of by others. For when it was originally wrote in *Hebrew*, it was so exact to, or very like, the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, that many have thought it to be the same, or very nearly agreeing to it. And though that first and most ancient Gospel in *Hebrew* is lost and made away, except a few Fragments of it, yet all the *Nazarene* Christians utterly deny any thing of this supernatural Incarnation ever being in their *Hebrew* Gospel, nor ever saw it till your *Greek* Translations; neither has Christ himself spoke one Syllable of it, nor *Mark* the Evangelist, nor *John* the beloved Apostle, nor any one of the Apostles, not one Tittle. Nor yet *Paul*, the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, in all his fourteen Epistles, not one Word, nor one Line, and therefore I believe it false and not true.

And as it has been manifestly proved, that it has no Foundation in the Prophet *Isaiab*, the Virgin being evidently the young Woman the Prophetess, whom he espoused before substantial Witnesses, and then went to or approached unto the Prophetess, and she conceived and bare a Son; not by the Holy Ghost, but by *Isaiab*, by the foretelling of the Holy Ghost, and calling his Name *Immanuel*, signifying, *God with us*, or God's Promise with us. So was the Virgin *Mary*, seven hundred Years after,

after, not gotten with Child by the Holy Ghost, but by her Husband *Joseph*, by the Promise and fore-telling of the Holy Ghost, and calling his Name *Jesus*.

So likewise *Elizabeth* conceived, not by the Holy Ghost, but by her Husband *Zacharias*, by the Promise and Fore-telling of the Holy Ghost, and calling his Name *John*. And tho' it is not expressly said, that *Zacharias* begot *John*, yet none but Bigots and Novices will believe otherwise; and for any to assert, that *Isaiab's* Wife, or *Joseph's* Wife, or *Zacharias's* Wife, were gotten with Child by any other Person or Agent, but by their own lawful Husbands, will be a most notorious, abominable Scandal, upon those three holy, pure, and virtuous Women.

And therefore, I think, it is the Duty of all holy, virtuous, chaste Women, both Widows, Wives, and Virgins, to vindicate the moral Character of the pure and holy God, and of their three dear and holy deceased Sisters.

The true Christian Religion, the moral Precepts of it as they came from *Jesus Christ*, the anointed Prophet, are most excellent and just, being both the natural and spiritual Scope of the holy Laws of God. And as he was born and bred, and liv'd and dy'd a *Jew*, so he never broke nor violated any one of them, nor ever taught any *Jew* to break them; but always to keep them, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments of God.*

I know that almost all Sects of People think that Christ came to destroy or abrogate the Law of *Moses*, which is so far from being true, that Christ tells us the direct contrary, saying, *Mat. v. 17, 18, 19, 20. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil; for verily, I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.* So that nothing can be more certain, than that the Law and the Prophets will continue in Force, *till the Heaven and Earth pass away.* Now there is nothing better than to write intelligibly, for almost all Writers, when upon this grand Point, leave their Readers in the Dark, and do not distinguish as they ought. For this whole Law and the Prophets, was given by God to his peculiar People *Israel*, by the Hand of *Moses* and the Prophets, and is, and will be, an eternal, perpetual Law to them, throughout their Generations for ever.

But this whole Law was never given to the *Gentile* World, nor ever intended or designed for them, except only such *Gentiles*, as of their own accord joined themselves by the Covenant of Circumcision, and then they were, by the express Law of God, accounted as *Israelites* born in the Land; and then they were obliged, and it was their Duty, *to keep the whole Law.* And nothing can be more ridiculous, than to hear almost all our pretended Christians pray,
that

that all God's ancient People the *Jews*, may be brought over to their false idolatrous and Popish Religion, viz. in plain *English*, that the *Jews* might all become Idolators and Rebels against God ; who has given them an eternally holy Law, *Thou shalt have no other Gods besides me. Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, nor the Likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above or in the Earth beneath. Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, &c. And the seventh Day is the Sabbath of Jehovah, thy God, in it thou shalt do no manner of Work,* and the universal Reason given by God himself, why it was the seventh Day and no other.

Yet these profligate Christians have Impudence and Wickedness enough to pray, that his ancient People may rebel against him, and openly violate his Law, in the Face of all the World, and own two other Persons to be God besides him who is the only living and true God. To make Images and bow down to them, and not remember the Sabbath-Day nor keep it holy, but to work upon the sacred seventh Day, and to prophane it, although the Creator of all the World, and of all Mankind, had from the Creation blessed and sanctified it, that is, set it apart as an eternal Memorial that he is our Creator, *Exod. xx.*

Now all these Laws of God in the Old Testament, that have an equal Relation to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and which are of right good use to the Latter as well as to the Former, are and ever will be in Force to the End of the

World ; so far as they are made known to all Men upon Earth.

But those Ceremonial Laws that were given to the *Jews* only, as a peculiar Nation, belong to the *Jews* only, and not to the *Gentiles*, to whom they were not intended, as may be clearly seen by the *Acts* of the Apostles *xxi. 20.* where *all the many thousand of Jews that believed, were all zealous of the Ceremonial Law : and were all of them, both James and all the Elders, and Paul too, being a Jew, to walk orderly and keep the Law, and all believing Jews.* Tho' we see plainly, at the same time, *the Gentiles that believed, were exempted, and had written and concluded, that they observe no such thing, save only, that they keep themselves from things offered to Idols, and from Blood, and from strangled, and from Fornication.*

And if the Apostles so positively and expressly forbid all the *Gentile* Believers, the above things, how much more think ye, would they have forbid their breaking the first, or second, or fourth Commandments of *Jehovah*. I will appeal to God, and to the upright Consciences of every truly honest Man and Woman under Heaven. God knoweth, who hath Access to all the secret Recesses of my Heart, that I aim at nothing but Truth, and have no sinister Ends nor Views ; but to give Glory to that good God that gave me my Breath, and in whose Hand my frail Life is, and before whom I both expect and hope to appear in a few Years, or Months, or Days, (I being now

66 Years old) just as it pleaseth him, trusting in his Mercy, Goodness and Wisdom, who, I am sure, *will distinguish between him that serveth the Lord, and him that serveth him not.*

And as this Doctrine of *Supernatural Incarnation*, Trinity, bowing to Images, Transubstantiation, Merits, Satisfaction, taking God's Name in vain, by calling any Person, or Thing by that sacred Name, which is not God, Violating that Day which he blessed and sanctified, these are manifestly dishonourable to the most high God, and apparently the false, absurd Inventions of Men; so let all good Men and Women, that delight to honour him, cast them away as a menstruous Cloth, and give Glory to the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, who rideth in the Chariots of the Clouds, and sitteth on the Circles of the Heavens, and dwelleth in the high and holy Place, yet with them also that are of an humble contrite Spirit, and tremble at his Word. For his Power standeth not in Multitude, nor his Might in strong Men; for he is a God of the Afflicted, and Helper of the Oppressed, an Upholder of the Weak, a Protector of the Forlorn; I pray thee, O God, who art Lord of Heaven, and King of all Creatures, defend me from all Violence and Evil of every Kind, and all others who set their Hearts aright to honour thee, give me Fortitude and a Heart to depend on thee, and when thy Will is, thou

merciful God, reach forth thy Hand, and take me into thy heavenly Ark above.

The *Jews* never had the Names of Women in their Genealogies; and *Luke* was not to add any. And therefore it is a vain Thing, yea, a very silly Shift, to talk of *Luke's* tracing up the Pedigree of *Mary*, when he never mentions her Name in that Genealogy, but expressly says, that *Joseph was the Son of Heli*, Luke iii. 23.

And *Matthew* expressly tells us, that *Jacob* begat *Joseph the Husband of Mary*, of whom was born *Jesus*, Mat. i. 16.

Now two direct Contradictions, can never be both true, for if *Jacob* begat *Joseph*, then he is not the Son of *Heli*, but *Luke* has told us a notorious and manifest Falshood. And as it seems he intended to run up the Pedegree of *Mary*, to be descended from *Nathan*, the Son of *David* (not from *Solomon*, the Son of *David*, as *Matthew* plainly says *Jacob* and *Joseph* were) I think a little more Honesty and Sincerity would have better adorned my Friend *Luke's* History, to have told us so, and to have mention'd *Mary*, and not *Joseph* the Son of *Heli*, which was not true. And I am inclined to think the plain Truth is, that *Luke* knew full well, that the *Jews* never drew down their Genealogies from Women, but from the Men, and therefore had not Brow enough to insert her Name; which would never prove *Jesus* to be the Son of *David* in any Genealogical Table, except *Joseph* begat

begat *Jesus*, and then it will run clear, natural, and indisputable.

Whereas upon the forged Story foisted into the present *Greek Translation of Matthew's Gospel*, it is a meer Rhodomontado. and seems to be invented by some weak-headed, sycophantical Christians, in order, no doubt, to deify the meek and lowly *Jesus*, who utterly abhorred any such Title ; but was so far from it, that he plainly told us, *I can do nothing of my self, but as I hear, I speak*. And this I find is no new Thing, for long before Christ was born, *Alexander's Court-Flatterers*, told him he was a God ; but being wounded, the Pain made him cry out, *You say that I am a God, and that I am Jupiter's Son, but this Wound tells me I am but a Man*. One would think, that *Alexander's* Heathen Priests were either more honest or less cunning than the pretended Christian Priests, otherwise they might have found out that artful thread-bear Distinction of Human-Nature and Divine Nature ; and then told him, it was only in the former Nature he felt Pain, but not in the latter, and so have held up his Deity to this Day. Some have often thought of that witty Answer of *Job* the famous *African*, Mahometan Priest, his Father a Prince, some Years ago brought into *England*, who having exceeding natural Parts, soon learnt our Language. And being often invited to the Houses of good Families, was asked, Whether he thought Christ was the Son of God ?

O no,

O no, no, says he, *dat cannot be true, for me did never read dat God had a Wife, and me be sure God would not have a Whore, so dat could not be so ; but you do mean dat Cbrist was de Son of God by Adoption, den it very true, he was good Prophet, and did teach de Way to God.*

So there was many a Smile in the Company, but no more Questions asked *Job* on that Head, for all were pretty well satisfied.

I would ask any serious judicious Person this plain Question, What Good do these unnatural, incoherent Doctrines promote or procure to Mankind ? Does believing the *Supernatural Incarnation*, make us any better Men ? Or does believing the most High God to be a Plurality of Persons, a quarter of a Dozen, or half a Dozen, make us one Jot the better Moralists ? Does believing Bread and Wine, to be no longer so, than till the Priest has blessed it, and then it is the real Flesh and Blood of *Jesus Cbrist* ? Will our Lives and Conversations any way be more acceptable to that Holy God who hateth Falshood ? When at the same Time, our Reason and our Senses, which God has given us, witnesses in us, that all the above Doctrines are manifestly false, absurd, and not true.

And I will appeal to the Breast of every pious, honest Man and Woman under Heaven, if it be not a thousand times more true, natural and rational, that *Jesus* was the real Son of *Joseph*, the real Son of *Jacob*, and by a just and lineal Descent of Genealogy, the Son of *David*, the Son of *Abram*, the Son of *Noah*, the Son

of

of Seth, which was the Son of Adam, which was the Son of God.

And that the Bread and Wine, both after the blessing it, is the very same it was before, and is no more altered nor transubstantiated, than the Bread, or Lamb and Kid, and Wine at the Passover, and whatsoever Priest eateth the Bread and drinketh the Wine, and at the same Time telleth the People, it is the real Flesh and Blood of Christ, he certainly knoweth he hath a Lye in his Right-Hand. And all the Faith in the World, will never make that Fact which never was so.

And would the Priest and People be so honest and wise to lay by safe, Part of what is blessed and consecrated, they would soon find by a rational sensible Demonstration of the one growing mouldy, and the other sour, that it is Bread and Wine still, and there is nothing more in it, than a Faith founded upon a Falshood,

If any Popish Protestants should say, *we do not believe this last Doctrine* ; I am very glad they do not, but you hold a Plurality of Persons, and that every one of them is the most high God, which is as directly contrary to our Reason, as the other is to our Senses.

And nothing is more certain, than that both these false Doctrines, and many others, as making Images of *Jesus* the anointed Prophet, and bowing down to them ; praying to *Mary* the Mother of God, as they call her, all these shameful Doctrines, and many more, are propp'd up, and supported by this absurd, incoherent Doctrine of *Supernatural Incarnation* :
Which

Which if it falls, as I have said before, great will be the Fall of it, for all the rest must and will inevitably fall with it.

Therefore I have laid my Ax to the Root of this corrupt Tree, that has brought forth so much evil Fruit, and when it falls, all the Superstructure of false Doctrines built on it, will assuredly fall with it.

Some of the most learned, eminent Men in all Ages, have own'd and affirm'd, that, " The present Copies of *Matthew's* Gospel are only " a Translation from the *Hebrew*, in which Language all Antiquity affirm that Gospel was " written ; may therefore more probably have " been subject to more Confusion and Disorder, " than any of the rest." See *Whiston's Harmony of the Four Evangelists*, Page 111.

But to mention all the Authors that have doubted, or deny'd the present Copies of *Matthew's* Gospel, would swell too large to be inserted in so small a Book as this.

And after all the Writings and Readings ever so much *pro* and *con*, there is enough in those two single Verses, *Matthew* i. 16. and *Luke* iii. 23. to convince and fully satisfy any honest, sincere Searcher after Truth, that there is a manifest, irreconcilable, direct Contradiction between them ; the one tells us in plain, express Words, and *Jacob begat Joseph the Husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.* And the other tells us. *And Jesus himself began to be about thirty Years of Age, being (as was supposed) the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Heli.*

Now

Now as I have observed, two such diametrical, palpable, direct Contradictions, can never be both true ; one must of absolute Necessity be false, for if *Jacob begat Joseph*, as it seems very evident, then for certain *Joseph* was not the Son of *Heli*.

And any wise Person may observe the Words which *Luke* thrusts in a Parenthesis, (*as was supposed*) *the Son of Joseph* ; because all the *Jews* that then liv'd at *Nazareth*, when *Joseph* married *Mary*, knew that he begat *Jesus*, and divers Sons and Daughters besides, as is manifest from their positive Affirmation, *is not this the Carpenter's Son, and his Mother Mary, and his Brothers and his Sisters, are they not all here with us ?* What can be more plain ? *Mat. xiii. 55.*

Mark also tells us the same, *that he came into his own Country and his Disciples follow him, and when the Sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the Synagogue, (but never on a first Day) and they said, Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary, the Brother of James and Joses, and Juda and Simon, and are not his Sisters here with us ; Mark vi. 3. And they said, Is not this Joseph's Son ? Luke iv. 22. Likewise the beloved Disciple is very express, and tells us, the Jews at Capernaum and at Nazareth, the Place where Joseph and Mary were married and brought up, they said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know ?*

Now here it is plain they were Neighbours, and knew *Joseph* and *Mary* both before their Marriage, at it, and after it, and the Births of all their Children. And besides all these Witnesses, that *Joseph* was the real Father of *Jesus*,
we

we have the best and only Witness in the World that could tell us truly, and that is *Mary* herself, who openly in the Temple, before the Doctors and Multitudes of Witnesses, solemnly declares, that *Joseph* was his Father, for she said, *Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing*, Luke ii. 42.

Can any one be so egregiously stupid, as to conceive, that this holy Woman would stand up in the sacred Temple of God, and declare before the Multitude, and the great Doctors of the Law, that *Joseph* was his Father, if it had not been true? Not only so, but she introduces her Assertion with a very solemn Remark, *Behold, thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing*. *Joseph* himself was present and all the People in the Temple believ'd her, and never doubted but that she spoke Truth, and always own'd it, and said, *Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know?*

But this *Incarnation* Story was not coin'd nor heard of in the World for above half a hundred Years after *Joseph* and *Mary* were married, and the Truth of this does plainly appear, from the universal Silence of all the *Jews*; who had they ever heard the least Hint, or seen the least Tittle of such a monstrous Story, how loudly would they have upbraided *Jesus* and all his Disciples with it: But, behold, not one Word of this Kind ever came from any of them, which is a strong and ponderous Reason to believe it is as false a Story, as that *Joseph was the Son of Heli*; the Truth or Non-truth of which, let every honest unprejudic'd Man judge according to the true upright Abilities that the most high God hath given him.

